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ELECTRON MICROSCOPE

The veriest speck—one peers and notes—
Is spawning ever smaller motes.

Ever still smaller jot contains
And breeds still ever smaller grains.

So each diminishing dot that hides
Still ever tinier dots divides

To many a multiplied element
In infinitesimal pattern blent;

And so on, until molecules breed,
At an ever increasing speed,

Invisible specks in which the mind
Can only delve still more to find

More swarming particles and trace
Points of energy circling space:

And in that space, where mind would accost
At last the riddle, the mind is lost.

And so, for all man tries to see,
All things escape to mystery.

LOUIS GINSBERG

AT THE ZOO

The hippopotamus, a huge steamshovel,
Ponderously yawns. Bizarre giraffes
Float by, like speckled birch-tree branches with
Irrelevant legs. Improbable as a hoax,
The vast rhinoceros is shambling past.
Elephants copy dark and scabrous hillocks.
Snakes, like coagulated lightnings, slither;
And cobras rear, hieratic, from old myths.
(What fever was it gambled so with matter?
What force, short-circuited in oddities,
Fumbled for an awareness in these beasts?)
The panther tows his dark despair. The lion,
With shaggy, uncle-bearded face, is wading
Deep in his rage. The leopards drift along,
Mottled, like stained and yellow Autumn-Leaves.
The orang-outang, like a Spanish grandee,
Partly dismantled, adjusts ironic grins. . . .

LOUIS GINSBERG